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Effective Date: April 1, 2005

Implementation Date: April 4, 2005

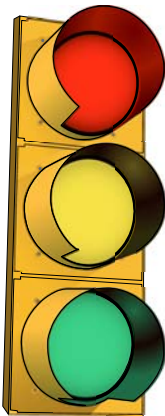
New Contrast Agents Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) Codes

Note: This article was revised to contain Web addresses that conform to the new CMS web site and to show they are now MLN Matters articles. All other information remains the same.

Provider Types Affected

All providers, suppliers and physicians billing Medicare fiscal intermediaries (FIs) or carriers for contrast agents

Provider Action Needed



STOP – Impact to You

As of April 1, 2005, you must use the new “Q” codes that will be added to the HCPCS when you bill for contrast agents

CAUTION – What You Need to Know

Beginning on April 1, 2005, the new HCPCS codes for contrast agents will become effective, **except for hospital outpatient departments, which should continue to use the current “A” codes.**

GO – What You Need to Do

Physicians, suppliers, and providers should make sure your billing staff knows that they must use the new codes that have been added to the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System as of April 1, 2005 in order to bill for contrast agents.

Background

Effective April 1, 2005, the HCPCS codes for contrast agents in the following table will be added to the HCPCS.

HCPCS Code	Short Descriptor	Long Descriptor
Q9945	LOCM <=149 mg/ml iodine, 1ml	Low osmolar contrast material, up to 149 mg/ml iodine concentration, per ml
Q9946	LOCM 150-199mg/ml iodine,1ml	Low osmolar contrast material, 150 - 199 mg/ml iodine concentration, per ml

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HCPSC Code	Short Descriptor	Long Descriptor
Q9947	LOCM 200-249mg/ml iodine, 1ml	Low osmolar contrast material, 200 - 249 mg/ml iodine concentration, per ml
Q9948	LOCM 250-299mg/ml iodine, 1ml	Low osmolar contrast material, 250 - 299 mg/ml iodine concentration, per ml
Q9949	LOCM 300-349mg/ml iodine, 1ml	Low osmolar contrast material, 300 - 349 mg/ml iodine concentration, per ml
Q9950	LOCM 350-399mg/ml iodine, 1ml	Low osmolar contrast material, 350 - 399 mg/ml iodine concentration, per ml
Q9951	LOCM \geq 400 mg/ml iodine, 1ml	Low osmolar contrast material, 400 or greater mg/ml iodine concentration, per ml
Q9952	Inj Gad-base MR contrast, ml	Injection, gadolinium-based magnetic resonance contrast agent, per ml
Q9953	Inj Fe-based MR contrast, ml	Injection, iron-based magnetic resonance contrast agent, per ml
Q9954	Oral MR contrast, 100 ml	Oral magnetic resonance contrast agent, per 100 ml
Q9955	Inj perflubron lip micros, ml	Injection, perflubron lipid microspheres, per ml
Q9956	Inj octafluoropropane mic, ml	Injection, octafluoropropane microspheres, per ml
Q9957	Inj perflutren lip micros, ml	Injection, perflutren lipid microspheres, per ml

To view payments for these new Q-codes, go to

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/McrPartBDrugAvgSalesPrice/01_overview.asp#TopOfPage on the CMS web site and look in the respective quarterly Medicare Part B drug pricing files posted there. In accordance with the standard methodology for drug pricing established by the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA), the payment for these contrast agents will be based on the Average Sales Price (ASP) plus 6 percent effective April 1, 2005.

Implementation

This change will be implemented in Medicare claims processing systems on April 4, 2005.

Related Instructions

Please note that:

- HCPCS codes Q9945 – Q9951 will replace codes A4644 – A4646; and
- HCPCS codes Q9952 – Q9954 will replace codes A4643 and A4647; **except that**
- **Hospital outpatient departments shall continue to bill codes A4644 – A4646, A4643, and A4647 and shall not report codes Q9945 – Q9957.**
- Non-institutional providers billing the carriers shall use Q9955 – Q9957 to report specific echocardiography contrast agents.
- All other echocardiography contrast agents not described by Q9955 – Q9957 shall be reported with A9700.

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Additional Information

The official instruction issued to your carrier/intermediary regarding this change may be found on the web at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/transmittals/downloads/R502CP.pdf> on the CMS web site.

If you have any questions, please contact your carrier/intermediary at their toll-free number, which may be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/CallCenterTollNumDirectory.pdf> on the CMS web site.

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